A CENTURY OF PRESIDENTS.

(A Prize Puzzle.)

By Mary Seymour.

As a great many readers of St. Nicholas cannot attend the inauguration ceremonies in Washington on March 4, I propose that we have a presidential pageant all to ourselves, and such a one as our beautiful capital has never seen. For I promise that there shall be, not the usual meager supply of two Presidents, one outgoing and one incoming, but a whole century full, and with them a goodly number of men who, as their cabinet advisers, have helped to guide our ship of state. There will be no order observed in our procession; in fact, the arrangement will be somewhat as it may happen; but the queerest thing about the procession will be that the time it will occupy in passing any given point will depend on the quickness of the lookers-on.

We secure the best possible point of view, and await the approach with a thrill of anticipation. There, in the carriage drawn by dapple-grays, are the self-styled "Old Public Functionary" (1) and the man said to be the author (2) of the expression so often quoted in part, "They see nothing wrong in the rule that to the victors belong the spoils of the enemy." And there are the President (3) who received the famous "X. Y. Z. despatches" and the "Hero of the Tarontee" (4). The man (5) who said, "A pound of pluck is worth a ton of luck," is by the side of the noble-minded statesman (6) who, after leaving the cabinet, declined an advantageous offer from a foreign financier, saying, "A man who has had the direction of the finances of his country so long as I have, should not die rich."

Do you know that President (7) now passing is the one for whose election mass-meetings and political processions were first brought into campaign use? As we look at the man beside him, we are reminded that Emerson described him as "the Master of Elegance" (8).

The weighty and absorbing questions of currency and finance are still fresh in our minds as we see the President (9) in whose administration specie payments were resumed after the Civil War, the Secretary (10) who issued the currency called "greenbacks," and the Chief Executive (11) who announced with satisfaction in his last annual message that "the country was without a national bank and without a permanent national debt." Seated by the latter is the President of the United States (12) who became a member of the Confederate States Congress.

We look for a moment at the only Chief Magistrate (13), since Washington, who was elected a second time virtually without an opposing candidate. His companion is the soldier (14) who, at the head of the Mississippi Rifles, led his famous "V" movement at the battle of Buena Vista.

We remember that questions about lands and boundaries have ever been matters for wise statesmen, as we recall the time when our able and many-sided President (15) more than doubled the territory of the United States, and when a certain Secretary of State (16) arranged the purchase of Alaska. And it was while that scholarly Naval Secretary (17) was in office that our government made the treaty that quieted the war-cry, "Fifty-four forty, or fight!" A resolute man in war and in peace was that President (18) who was counseled by the "Kitchen Cabinet."

We wave a salute to "the Cincinnatus of the West" (19) and to the Chief Magistrate (20) during whose campaign was first used a political nickname, meaning "chief," taken from the extinct Massachusetts Indian language as found in Eliot's Bible. Behind those curveting bays you see the first "dark horse" (21) elected to the Presidency, and the man (22) who served seventeen years in Congress after leaving the White House. There come the Secretary (23) who negotiated the first treaty between the

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United States and China, and the doughty general (24) who, in a well-fought battle, gave the characteristic order, "A little more grape, Captain Bragg!"

Lowell said of the man (25) to whom we now turn our eyes, "He cannot let go the apron-string of the Past." He is with the last Chief Magistrate (26) belonging to the great Whig party. And now we see the President (27) who set in operation the civil-service reform act, and the one (28) who was privileged to have his life written for his campaign by the author of "The Wonder Book."

We look intently at the statesman (29) whom Sydney Smith called "a living lie, because no man on earth could be so great as he looked," and our eyes linger on "the kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man . . . the First American" (30). It was high praise that Bancroft bestowed on that able leader (31) when he referred to him as the "wisest civilian of Virginia." The author and orator (32) by his side received only the seven electoral votes of Vermont when nominated for the Presidency by the Anti-Masonic party.

The next carriage in line brings the President (33) who took the oath of office in his rooms at the Kirkwood House in Washington, and the friend (34) of Lafayette against whom, as a cabinet official, false charges were made in the House of Representatives — the movement being known as the "A. B. Plot." Though we cannot hear his matchless voice, we see the face of the statesman (35) who named the protective-tariff policy "the American System," and with him we hail the President (36) in whose administration Oklahoma, the last new Territory, was created.

Both of the men who bring up the rear of the remarkable procession had military experience. One (37) directed a telling fire on the city of Mexico from a gun placed in the steeple of a village church; and the other (38) once commanded a company of minute-men of whom John Randolph said, "They were raised in a minute, armed in a minute, marched in a minute, fought in a minute, and vanquished in a minute!" That energetic youth became the profound jurist whose decisions best interpreted and greatly strengthened the Constitution under which we live.

The fanciful parade is over. As we turn from it, let us look with clearer sight at the men and things of to-day.

LIST OF PRIZES OFFERED FOR ANSWERS TO THE PRIZE PUZZLE "A CENTURY OF PRESIDENTS."

FOR the best answers to the Presidential puzzle on page 430, according to the conditions of the competition, ST. NICHOLAS offers the following prizes:

One prize of Five Dollars.
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These, amounting to sixty dollars, will be given in the form of brand-new one-dollar bills. Directions for preparing and forwarding answers are given below. The competition is open to all regular readers of ST. NICHOLAS from the age of ten to the age of eighteen years inclusive.

The Committee of Judges in awarding prizes will take into account not only the correctness of the answers, but the age of the sender and the neatness of the manuscript. All answers must be received at the office of ST. NICHOLAS before April 15, 1897, and no competitor may send more than one copy.

Do not write letters or notes that require a reply, as the Editor cannot undertake to answer questions concerning the competition. The conditions are fully stated here.

Each number represents a question to be answered by the name of a man of distinction in the history of the United States. Arrange the answers in the order of the questions, and number them on the left-hand margin.

Give your name, age, and address at the top of each page of the answers, leaving space enough above to fasten the pages together. Use sheets of note-paper size, and black ink, and write on only one side of the paper.

Address: Office of ST. NICHOLAS,
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